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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDED ADDEE AND CAPTION)

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TAGS: [EAGR](#) [FAO](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [UN](#) [WB](#)

SUBJECT: FAO DG DIOUF'S VIEWS ON IMPLEMENTING L'AQUILA SUMMIT FOOD SECURITY DECLARATION

REF: USUN ROME 09 and 41

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11. (SBU) Summary and Action Request. FAO Director General (DG) Jacques Diouf told the Charge on August 28 that he was delighted with President Obama's strong leadership on food security at the L'Aquila Summit and wants to use the November World Food Summit to adopt the five L'Aquila principles at the global level by all 192 member countries. However, Diouf would like the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to play the lead role in implementing the L'Aquila Summit although at this point he does not apparently have a clear plan for how to do so. At this stage, Mission suggests countering Diouf's plans for CFS global governance by advocating instead having a reformed CFS with its universal membership serve as a forum for a number of developing countries to discuss their challenges, experiences and best practices at the national level. Mission requests guidance (para 5) on how the CFS can best be used to promote the Global Partnership without playing a governing or coordinating role. On other issues, Diouf was pleased the US and Italian Governments are sponsoring the September 14-15 L'Aquila implementation meeting in Washington, welcomed the USG contribution of \$500,000 to the IPA Trust Fund, saying it sends a strong signal of U.S. commitment to FAO reform, and defended his draft budget proposal as a "no growth, maintenance" budget that only maintains purchasing power. End Summary and Action Request

12. (SBU) The recently-arrived Charge paid a courtesy call on DG Diouf on August 28 in preparation for a number of September meetings that will discuss the objectives of the November World Food Summit, the role of a reformed CFS and the FAO's 2010-11 Program of Work and Budget. Diouf was very cordial and the meeting lasted almost 90 minutes as Diouf described at length his experience in promoting agricultural development since the 1996 World Food Summit.

13. (SBU) Diouf lauded President's Obama's "strong leadership" at the L'Aquila Summit, saying he was "delighted" with the outcome, and was optimistic there will be significant progress over the next three years. He stated that the principles in the L'Aquila Declaration need to serve as the blueprint for implementing the global strategy and the primary

objective of the November World Food Summit would be to adopt L'Aquila's five principles at a global level. Diouf agreed with the Charge on the need to develop country-led food security plans and, in this connection, said he was pleased the United States had taken the initiative with the Italians to call the September 14-15 Road from L'Aquila meeting in Washington, at which the FAO will be represented by the Assistant Director General for Technical Assistance, Jose Maria Sumpasi, and several of his directors with in-depth knowledge of projects. Diouf characterized this as a "high-level delegation of experts" as requested in the invitation. In response to the Charge's query as to his objectives for the November Summit, Diouf responded that the principal aim of the Summit is to adopt the L'Aquila principles at the global level since the Summit, with its universal participation, provides the best forum to "universalize" these principles.

¶4. (SBU) Diouf also wants the Summit to approve the CFS as the new governance structure for the global food strategy on the grounds that only the FAO has the universal membership and country-level expertise and resources needed to effectively implement the L'Aquila principles. He apparently has no clear plan yet for having the CFS play such a lead coordination role so we have the opportunity in the coming weeks to shape the best possible outcome for the CFS by proposing that the reformed CFS have no governance role but rather serve as a global forum to facilitate the multilateral aspect of the Global Partnership through productive country and sub-regional level discussion on how national plans can best promote agricultural development and investment. At this stage, therefore, Mission suggests countering Diouf's plans for CFS global governance by advocating instead having a reformed CFS with its universal membership serve as a forum for a number of developing countries to discuss their challenges, experiences and best practices at the national level. We need to ensure that the CFS does not become a "talk shop" at the global level with a few activist states, such as France and Brazil, dominating the conversation.

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¶5. (SBU) A number of other delegations, including Sweden (representing the EU presidency), Canada, Mexico, the UK and New Zealand told the Charge on August 31 that they want to identify a constructive role for the CFS that focuses on analysis, not governance, at the national level and draws on the considerable technical expertise of the FAO professional staff. The departing British deputy permrep suggested the CFS could become a useful forum by having a sub-regional and national focus since the agricultural challenges vary greatly within a region such as sub-Saharan Africa and recommended that the existing regional groups in FAO select representatives from their sub-regions for CFS presentations, along the lines of the presentations being planned for the UNGA side event later this month. Mission is sympathetic to these views. ACTION REQUEST: Mission requests guidance on how the CFS can best be used to promote the Global Partnership without playing the sort of global governing or coordinating role envisaged by Diouf. We suggest that the mid-October CFS meeting could serve as useful follow-up to the UNGA event and set the stage for a successful Summit if the session provides a meaningful opportunity for developing countries to discuss their experiences and plans to achieve food security. As the World Bank has chosen not to participate in CFS plenary sessions, we encourage Washington to urge World Bank participation to help shape a more realistic approach. End Action Request.

¶6. (SBU) On other issues, the Charge raised the U.S. \$500,000 contribution to the IPA Trust Fund and stressed the USG's strong interest in continued reform in the organization to increase its effectiveness. Diouf replied that he was very

pleased with the contribution and said it sent a "strong signal" of U.S. support for reform, which he fully supports. The Charge also raised the upcoming discussions on the budget and emphasized the need for a zero nominal growth budget that incorporates fully all the costs of implementing the IPA reforms. Diouf responded by reiterating the same points that had made in his recent letter to Assistant Secretary Brimmer; e.g., he had proposed a "no growth, maintenance" budget that only maintains purchasing power and, at the request of member governments, had already folded half the cost of the IPA into the regular budget.

17. (SBU) Comment. While we were pleased to hear Diouf's goal of using the November Summit to promote the L'Aquila principles on a global basis, we are concerned with his continued attempt to have the CFS play the lead role in L'Aquila implementation and, as noted above in para 5, seek guidance on how we can best transform the CFS into a global forum to advance the Global Partnership, build upon the UNGA event later this month and thereby set the stage for a successful Summit in November. We will provide recommendations in a separate message on the upcoming budget discussions.
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